



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON DC

Mike O'Rielly
Commissioner

November 28, 2018

The Honorable Jim Justice
Governor
State of West Virginia
Office of the Governor
State Capitol
1900 Kanawha Blvd., East
Charleston, WV 25305

Dear Governor Justice:

Thank you for your recent letter outlining efforts to end the practice of 9-1-1 fee diversion in West Virginia. As I have noted, diverting necessary funds from Public Service Answering Points ("PSAPs") places the citizens at risk by delaying the time it takes for first responders to arrive at the scene after an emergency call is placed. Longer wait times, fewer or overworked personnel, and outdated or inferior equipment to handle the call loads can lead to significant public safety problems. It can also prevent 9-1-1 call centers from modernizing to Next Generation 9-1-1 technologies. Further, as you recognize, diverting states are ineligible for certain federal funding programs.

Although it is concerning that the state statute permits the diversion of these important funds, your commitment and leadership to introduce and facilitate passage of legislation next year to end these practices is very encouraging. I am pleased that your proposal will ensure that 100 percent of the state's 9-1-1 fee revenue will be dedicated to funding the state's PSAPs. While West Virginia may be reported as diverting fees in this year's report to be released at the end of the year, the passage of this legislation should guarantee that this is the last time the state will appear as a diverter and that these funds are put to their intended purpose of maintaining and improving public safety communications systems.

I would also like to thank you for the kind invitation to visit West Virginia. I would be pleased to join you to get an insider's view into the communications challenges faced by the state, how they are being overcome, and what I may be able to do at the Commission to help in this effort. I wish you and your family happy holidays and look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Sincerely,

Mike O'Rielly